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Foreword—

Into the suburbs of America are migrating a large number of the people who have constituted the leadership of small communities scattered over the countryside. This concentration makes possible a more progressive community development than is possible elsewhere. This issue of *Community Service News* deals particularly with the opportunities, needs and problems of suburban communities.

No issue of *C.S. News* aroused so much interest or was more extensively used than was the September-October issue on "The Community School." Almost three times as many copies were sold as with any previous issue. One subscriber wrote "My copy is worn out—please send ten more," and others wrote similarly; some suggested neighboring school or community leaders who would be interested in seeing such material. Two similar criticisms were received, one from an extension sociologist, the other printed herewith, to the effect that the discussion of school consolidation was too vague and without concrete examples and suggestions as to what a good school system should be. We had planned to carry extended accounts of one or two good community schools, but decided that to do so would be misleading, since each community is unique. We came to the conclusion that we cannot supply the answers, but only processes which each community and each school administration may employ to realize their own purposes and culture in their own school. This process is a generalized one depending primarily upon understanding and attitudes. We hope this issue of *C.S. News*—and the books and pamphlets reviewed in it—will help in this development.

The next issue will deal particularly with the question, "What is the role of small community initiative and pioneering in a national and world crisis," with an article by Arthur E. Morgan on community prospects in Africa, and a number of other accounts of communities at home and abroad.

Annual meeting of Community Service, Inc. The annual meeting of members of Community Service, Inc., will be held in Yellow Springs, Ohio, on Saturday, May 22, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The meeting is open to all who desire to attend; further details will appear in the next issue. The Annual Conference on the Small Community will not be held this year.

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Community Service, Inc., is an organization to promote the interests of the community as a basic social institution, concerned with the economic, recreational, educational, cultural and spiritual development of its members. Community Service was incorporated in 1940 as a non-profit organization to supply information and service for small communities and their leaders, in the belief that the decay of the American community constitutes a crisis which calls for steady and creative effort. The nation-wide interest expressed during the succeeding years has reinforced this opinion.

E PLURIBUS UNUM: A NEW POLICY FOR SUBURBAN COMMUNITIES

By GRISCOM MORGAN

The way to the good community is not by trying to go back to an early state of society, but by discovering how to preserve and increase the inherent values of the small community of the past while taking advantage of the values the modern world has to offer, and of the conditions which it seems to impose upon people today. One of the most pervasive influences of today's world is the metropolitan complex, that combination of the metropolitan city, with its nearby suburban development, and beyond it circles of nearby suburbs, neighboring towns, and gradually decreasing population, wealth and concentration of life and action until the distant hinterland is reached, with its progressive impoverishment of population and resources as these are drawn to the central city. The methods and policies by which this complex is dealt with may deeply affect the quality of life of a large part of our people, including those of the related smaller communities.

Metropolitan cities and their suburbs are facing grave common problems. The metropolis of today generally exhibits degenerative processes which spread from slum to suburb, and from one suburb to the next. Good business and residential districts one after another are infected with deterioration of use, habitation, upkeep, tax revenue and values. As the infection approaches any area, people and business establishments tend to flee from suburb to suburb. Teeming thousands of new arrivals, with rural "outhouse" standards of living, are temporarily bottled up in one area, only to break out and sprawl over into another residential district. Though metropolitan dominance over the economy of the hinterland has forced migration to the growing source of employment, it has failed to house these displaced persons, and they create slums by their crowding.*

There has long been a tendency on the part of the metropolis to seek to annex all contiguous communities, and to destroy their autonomy, integrity and very existence, along with their community service organizations. These suburban communities, on the other hand, often have provoked such action by trying to escape the burden of taxation for public utilities and services required by the central city, though their own income arises from their proximity to the city, and from the labor and services of people who work in the big city. Also there has been refusal to face the fact that the needs and resources of different suburbs vary greatly. Well-to-do city business and professional men maintain their residences in deluxe, restricted

*See "Metropolitan Dominance as a Cause of National Instability," *Community Service News*, Vol. IX, No. 1 (Jan.-Feb. 1951), page 4.

suburbs, with abundant resources for schools, streets, parks and amenities, while the poorer of the suburbs, and the unincorporated "suburban sprawl" which extends across the countryside, which house industrial workers and servants, are desperately in need of services and utilities. By such means wealthy suburbs may seek immunity from taxation and responsibility.

There is beginning to emerge in the United States and Canada a pattern of metropolitan organization which may forecast a new and better day for our great cities and their suburbs. Instead of the "megapolis" which devours men and communities in its insatiable maw, producing a great saurian mass with too little central brain for its management, we may be coming to a day when a metropolitan area will be, not a sodden political and social mass, but a community of communities, each one alive and wholesome in its own right, yet with responsible coordination like that of a well trained orchestra. This development in America is largely independent of, yet quite similar to a trend in Europe. Perhaps similar needs are suggesting similar remedies.

Recently a distinguished visiting European, Professor Michel Mouskhely of the University of Strasburg, described the dominant present trend of European social and political thought to be away from both totalitarian central government and from "political atomism"; and toward a general adoption of "federalism." By that term he means a decentralization of government for local and regional purposes, with centralized power retained, and increased where necessary, only for those elements of the common life that are beyond effective local administration. This is a reversal of the trend in Europe during the past few centuries. Europe is coming to this point of view after bitter experience with extreme centralization.

In America, notwithstanding loud voices to the contrary, the trend to centralize continues. This has been especially true in the consolidation of metropolitan cities and their suburban areas. Only now is selective decentralization coming to be a clearly recognized possibility, for there has now appeared on the American continent an actual case on a metropolitan scale of the application of this theory of "federalism."

How can small towns and villages near metropolitan cities maintain their community existence, and still develop a responsible organic relation to the expanding metropolis? And how can the central city reduce its problems to manageable dimensions, and get the help from the suburbs which it needs in meeting common problems? Need for a solution to this problem becomes increasingly acute. About a quarter of America's population lives within the suburban areas surrounding its one hundred and seventy major cities. So great has been the migration to these suburban areas both from metropolitan cities and from the hinterlands, that these suburbs had half of the population increase of the country between 1940

and 1950. Among the major reasons for this migration to the suburbs is the desire for community living in place of the anonymity and pressure of the huge metropolis, and the impoverishment of hinterland areas by metropolitan economic centralization, making it necessary for people from farm, village and town to come into the vicinity of the metropolis to find market for their labor and produce, and to find the cultural advantages that have tended to migrate cityward along with the nation's wealth.

The case is clear that both individually and as communities the great majority of suburbanites desire to maintain their separate community identity. Many such a community and well governed suburb does not seek to escape from responsibility to the metropolis, though it greatly desires to maintain responsibility for its own affairs, and for its small community values. In this situation it resists annexation by the metropolitan center.

As a rule the metropolitan center achieved its status in the first place by the process of annexation of surrounding communities, a gentle form of conquest. Up to the present this has been the only pattern of metropolitan enlargement that is well established. [Where areas adjoining a city are developed with the intent that they shall be extensions of the city, of course annexation is normal and proper.]

Central cities and the surrounding towns and villages are today in a predicament similar to that of the city-states of a bygone era when the strongest power in an area conquered and incorporated into itself nearby city-states, countries and provinces, which generally resisted the loss of their identity. Assuming that a process of nation-building was necessary, was it necessary to destroy the smaller and weaker units? Among nations, the United States and Switzerland stand out as exceptions to the general rule of growth by conquest. They are federations of equal states, not dominant states that have grown dominant by devouring their neighbors. The affairs of cities today form a parallel with those of the city nation-states of the past; they too have the alternatives of conquest or federation. Even with regard to population, our metropolitan areas today are as great as the populations of most states a few centuries ago when national consolidation was getting under way.

As long as the metropolis continues to dominate and draw the life blood of purchasing power and wealth from hinterland areas, so long will the metropolis be a focal point of trouble. But much can be done to alleviate the condition, giving city-employed people some of the community life and responsibility they crave as conditions for humane living and democratic responsibility. Moreover, the very process of modifying governmental organization to take smaller community needs into consideration can do much to improve government and administration of metropolitan affairs. It may

even set a pattern for progressive intercommunity cooperation in other areas away from metropolitan centers.

The entire metropolis—central city and suburbs—is an organic whole. Each part is dependent upon the others. Sometimes the central city is smaller than the combined suburbs, sometimes much larger. The intimate community of leading bankers, industrialists and merchants that dominate the city and its government may live largely beyond the city limits, where they seek to give their families good environment in communities over which they have intimate control and in which they participate. The skilled labor, professional and white-collar groups that flee from the central city into other suburban surroundings are obviously integral parts of the metropolis, as are the industries. The inner slum and the outer fringe areas of more indigent people are also parts of the larger whole.

The total metropolis seldom has had legal and governmental existence. It is a balkan congeries of conflicting, overlapping and interdependent governmental entities, each consciously concerned with itself, none admitting concern with the whole. As the self-interest of the central city leads it to seek to annex and totally absorb the suburbs that hem it in, it and its functionaries—city planners, administrators, social service and other officials—think of the centralized organization of the central city as assuming ever wider areas of responsibility. The suburbs, on the other hand, while jealously guarding their independence, have assumed little responsibility and express little concern for the problems of other suburbs or of the metropolis as a whole.

With this background of conflict of city and suburbs, there have recently been some interesting and significant efforts to deal with the problems of our cities, in writing as well as in actual organization. It is interesting that a variety of unrelated efforts in different places have independently led to common conclusions with regard to the basic over-all problem.

The major contribution to the subject is a section by Victor Jones in the important Urban Redevelopment study directed by Coleman Woodbury, whose reports, *Urban Redevelopment* and *The Future of Cities and Urban Redevelopment* (a number of books by different authors under one cover), were published last year. Another study is a little book written by an authority in the field, Miles Colean, for the Twentieth Century Fund. A third study is yet more impressive because the local findings have resulted in actual accomplishment. This is the governmental organization of metropolitan Toronto, the outgrowth of a study by the Ontario Municipal Board, reported in *Decisions and Recommendations* of the Board, January 20, 1953. There are a number of other studies, such as Copenhagen's use of the new

Danish Urban Development Act, and the report on Rotterdam, Holland, *The Future of the City, the City of the Future.*

The central idea of all these efforts is the need for a supermetropolitan agency to represent the interests and serve the requirements of the entire metropolitan area. At the same time, each finds that consolidation of governmental organization of the entire area with the government of the central city is either impossible, harmful, or, in the case of Rotterdam, a process that should be reversed.

Toronto, like many metropolitan cities, had made application to the Ontario Municipal Board for the powers to annex and completely dissolve thirteen local municipal governments in a large suburban area surrounding it. Eleven of the suburbs joined in opposing this application. The twelfth made application for the amalgamation of *some* governmental services in the suburban area. The central city had 675,000 inhabitants, the suburbs had 350,000.

All parties in the Toronto issue prepared excellent evidence to support their claims. Seemingly it was an either-or proposition between two parties each of which had a strong case to make. And in making their cases they made the typical case of most American cities and suburban areas: either completely absorb the suburbs in a single city government, or else leave things as they were. But unlike the states in the United States, the Canadian Province of Ontario had a board set up to serve the best interests of municipalities rather than only as a legal court to decide for one or another of two parties. Interestingly, such a state function is strongly urged by Victor Jones in his section of the Urban Redevelopment study.

So the Ontario Municipal Board took the matter in hand. It carefully reviewed the extensive evidence put forward by the city of Toronto, and that presented by the suburbs. It found both arguments sound, but decided that neither had got to the heart of the matter. The suburbs had discovered no legal grounds for proposing an answer to the problem of the metropolis—whose necessary existence they recognized—so they concentrated on marshalling evidence against the annexation that would put them out of existence. The Ontario Municipal Board sought an answer to the problem that would maintain the values of both central city and suburbs, and which would solve the metropolitan problem.

Among the suburbs of Toronto there are cities with population as great as eighty thousand and towns as small as five thousand. Each city had its own deep-rooted tradition, practices and organization that, in case of merger with the larger city, would be violated or destroyed. Even if it were desirable to have but one city government supersede all of them, the task would be formidable. The board found strong evidence that per capita "costs in

general tend to increase with the size of the municipality [with] . . . an almost endless list of desirable but unnecessary expenditures regardless of its true financial position."

More important, the Ontario Municipal Board found "very serious objection to . . . the proposed concentration of all municipal duties and responsibilities in a single all-powerful Council which would be expected to deal wisely and adequately with both local and metropolitan problems. . . ." The report continued:

Local government involving direct and personal contacts between the electors and the elected representatives . . . is considered to be the right and privilege of local taxpayers and the primary function of local councils and elected bodies. . . . The proposal of the city assumes that a single city council can cope with all the local, sectional and regional problems of the present local governments in an area of more than two hundred and forty square miles and a present population of well over a million persons. The board cannot accept this fundamental assumption. On the contrary, it is convinced that one essential of a sound metropolitan government for the Toronto area must be the separation of local and metropolitan municipal functions and duties.

A fourth serious objection to the city's proposal has been . . . grave doubt whether the need for reform of local government in this area justifies and requires the complete dissolution of the existing municipal institution and the creation of a form of government bitterly opposed by eleven of the thirteen local municipalities concerned. . . . Nor can the board in any way agree with the somewhat cynical view that the appointed and elected officials of the local municipalities who . . . appeared before the board to explain carefully and intelligently their views on this very controversial issue, . . . were after all merely protecting their own positions. . . . In brief, they could not bring themselves to believe that the form of metropolitan government desired by the city could be properly called a local government. To them the complete loss of their local autonomy meant domination by the central city . . . regardless of any system of representation by population or any proposed division of the proposed new city into wards.

Such were the findings of the Ontario board with regard to Toronto's request to swallow up a large suburban area. The board expressed itself as also convinced that the reluctance of suburbs to be annexed arose from "a conscious or unconscious conviction of the importance of preserving a place for real local government, and that few, if any, of the opponents of amalgamation are prepared to defend the present system as a suitable form of government in a metropolitan area." In other words, whereas the drive to annex suburbs is generally met with most severe resistance, a sound alternative metropolitan government that would preserve the local community might be welcomed by the suburbs.

The Ontario Board report goes on to suggest that the most promising approach to a solution of this question lies in a "dual system of government,

an acceptance of the idea that the establishment of a strong central authority is the best method of dealing with vital problems affecting the entire area, and a conviction that the retention of local government for local purposes is not only desirable but necessary."

The report of the Ontario Municipal Board is a document worth reading and study in full. The particular way in which the subsequent federation of Metropolitan Toronto put those principles into practice may or may not be as good as could have been provided, but many aspects are sociologically sound and well conceived. For example, there is a local school board in each of the thirteen municipalities, with a metropolitan school board to correlate the educational facilities in the metropolitan area and through the metropolitan corporation to finance the local schools up to a minimum standard. The metropolis as a whole has powers of assessment for taxation, supplies water and sewage mains and main thoroughfares to the local municipalities, has responsibility for part of the health and welfare, for justice, housing, redevelopment, planning, and for over-all budgeting. The Metropolitan Council has twelve representatives from the suburban governments and twelve from the central city.

The work of the Ontario Municipal Board has been criticized for failing to take into account in its study the prevailing literature and past experience on the subject. From this standpoint it is significant that two outstanding authorities who have recently surveyed the field, Victor Jones and Miles Colean, come to similar conclusions. Victor Jones, in his section, "Local Government in Metropolitan Areas" in *The Future of Cities and Urban Redevelopment*, writes: "People identified with the central city and those identified with the suburbs are justified by their interests, *as they have defined them*, in fearing each other. What is needed is to place these interests into the larger community context so that the periphery is concerned with downtown, and the city is concerned with the fringe. This can only be done by bringing the various interests—the dichotomy of suburbs vs. central city is too simple to describe them—into a working relationship with each other. . . . The formal organization of such relationships through governmental action is the problem we are concerned with in this study."

Mr. Jones quotes a succinct statement of the metropolitan problem by Thomas Reed: "A metropolis is not an assemblage of individuals so much as a collection of communities into which individuals are already assembled." Mr. Jones goes on to say:

The one clear lesson we all should have learned by now from the many attempts in this country and abroad to establish metropolitan governments is that the local units of government are tough organizations with many political and legal protections against annihilation or absorption by another government.

This alone would lead us to search for a form of metropolitan government that will preserve the identity of existing units of government.

Like the Ontario municipal board, Victor Jones surveys the different ways in which suburbs, central city and county may achieve an effective working relationship with each other in the setting of the whole metropolis. He points out that suburbs have shown little interest in the broader metropolitan problem, and that "urban redevelopers are principally concerned with . . . the conservation of the city's physical plant from obsolescence. . . . If we leave it to the professional city planner to deal with these [wider] relationships, we will fail to understand our own problems and we will make the task of the planning agency difficult if not impossible."

Like the Ontario board, Mr. Jones claims that we must not regard the alternatives as simply the anarchy of "the present dispersal of local government . . . in hundreds of municipalities, counties and special districts, or their replacement with a single neat and tidy government." Various stop-gap or partial solutions of the problem are reviewed, such as metropolitan planning without governmental authority, inter-community arrangements for services, special districts, etc. Mr. Jones concludes that some form of larger government needs to be organized that would integrate the parts of the metropolis into a working whole without destroying or disintegrating the wholesome local governmental and community life of the suburban communities. While "nothing should be done to discourage inter-governmental arrangements, . . . they will not serve in place of more comprehensive schemes." Likewise, "disembodied planning" for the metropolitan area "is not a substitute for government."

The county might suitably serve for the governmental unit of the metropolitan area, but for a number of serious drawbacks. The whole tradition and establishment of the county is unsuited to this purpose, and its area generally does not conform to that of the metropolis. "One of the principal impediments to the transformation of the county into a metropolitan government is the legal concept of the county as an administrative subdivision of the state created almost exclusively with a view to the policy of the state at large." If it is to serve as the unit of metropolitan government the county would have to be drastically altered, a difficult task in view of the political power of rural county machines in the state legislature.

In conclusion Mr. Jones asserts that only a government with metropolitan-area-wide "jurisdiction can plan and provide the services, physical facilities, guidance, and controls necessary." He states:

Our metropolitan communities are growing so large that we can no longer content ourselves with attempting to bring the whole area under one all-purpose general local government organized according to a pattern suitable for government of a nineteenth-century village.

I doubt that any proposal has much chance of success unless it is based on the federal principle of allocating metropolitan functions to a metropolitan government and leaving other functions to less-than-metropolitan governments. . . . Irresponsible local government fragmented among a multitude of municipalities, counties, and special districts unable to meet the problems of metropolitan life, frustrates the citizen and leaves him hopeless. The other extreme of a giant all-purpose metropolitan municipality would certainly be too cumbersome for any ordinary group of citizens to influence.

The Netherlands study of Rotterdam's metropolitan problem, *The Future of the City, the City of the Future*, goes even further than the Ontario and U.S. studies in suggesting that different quarters or parts even of the central city that have inborn traditions and customs and a feeling of belonging together should be made partly autonomous, especially in cultural organization.

Miles Colean's attractive illustrated book, *Renewing Our Cities*, briefly covers some of the same ground in its 181 pages as the urban redevelopment volume of 764 pages, except that he gives little consideration to small community values and more underlying considerations. His conclusion is nearly identical to that of Victor Jones:

All questions head up to the need for some method of integrating the physical structure and political functions of the metropolitan area.

In most places little is to be expected from the ordinary processes of annexation. . . . Probably the best promise of success would come from some form of federation which would centralize control over functions of area-wide concern, at the same time leaving the original units some measure of jurisdiction over plainly local matters.

This problem of uniting communities into an area federation is of importance to rural hinterland communities as well as to metropolitan suburbs. The principle, "united we stand, divided we fall," applies to communities of all sizes. For example, the relatively small cities and towns that are associated with each other in Southern Illinois, Inc., a hinterland of Chicago and St. Louis, are making significant headway in consequence of their united endeavor. The Upper Winooski Valley Development Association in Vermont is one of many less formal associations.

The general principle of regional governmental organizations of smaller towns was given outstanding expression by Lewis Mumford in an article, "Regional Planning and the Small Town," reprinted in the September-October, 1950, *Community Service News*. Mumford envisions a regional federation of towns that will together achieve the advantages of metropolitan living without any one of them growing too large and sprawling over the landscape and destroying its natural environment. To achieve such ■ control

and direction of growth requires authority over and beyond each local community.

The same principle is needed in dealing with the problems of school consolidation. Huge consolidations of schools, and county and state domination of school districts, are not the only answers to the need for central services and administration. Thus in many places the principle needs to be applied: E Pluribus Unum.

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"A neighborhood unit should have an independent local government. Public officers within immediate reach of the voters would be able to provide a more direct influence of the will of the people upon their administrations. The sense of community spirit lost in the chaos of the fast-growing metropolis can here be developed to favorably influence the growth of distinct characteristics of the community."

—WALTER GROPIUS, in *Rebuilding Our Communities*.

We read in the *Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletin* that in 1948 during a typical business day nearly 4,000,000 people moved into and out of lower Manhattan.

SUBURBAN COMMUNITIES IN SELF DEFENSE

A valiant endeavor is being made in a group of suburban communities in Hamilton County, in the vicinity of metropolitan Cincinnati, to maintain the integrity of their community existence. Cincinnati is one of the more vigorous of American cities in seeking to master the pressing problems of urban decay, and has followed the conventional approach in seeking the annexation and dissolution of many suburbs and the consolidation of their schools and other services. At the same time as the city seeks to extend its dominion, the county board of education, largely an agent of the state, has forced consolidation on the schools under *its* authority away from control and location in the local communities.

The Hamilton County case brings into view three conflicting major drives in American civilization. First, it is a clear example of dominating action of a state and county bureaucracy seeking increased control over a crucial function of life, removing it not only from the community, but also from responsible democratic control. The evidence for this statement will be developed later.

Second, it is an example of a central city seeking the dissolution of local communities, opposing their "federal" participation as communities in the metropolitan complex. Third, it is an example of the will of urban people to maintain a high level of suburban smaller community existence.

One of these Hamilton County communities, Sharonville, Ohio, has a pioneering school system that has begun to adopt the modern method of supervised training of high school students on the job in what is called "part-time diversified occupational training." As an alternative to the huge centralized occupational training adjuncts of overconsolidated schools, this program has important and perhaps necessary advantages, particularly with regard to work habits, emotional development and community values. Other Hamilton County villages and suburban towns are doing well in other ways. From eight to eleven community schools are now to be consolidated into one huge district with a central high school that will have somewhere between 900 and 1800 students.

In its drive to consolidate schools in Hamilton County, the county board of education would dissolve local boards of education and appoint a board that would represent nobody and tax all to create and administer a huge school during its first formative years. In seeking to persuade the citizens of the desirability of this move, serious misstatements of fact were resorted to, according to consulting engineer William W. Stillwell, a leader of a suburban citizens' committee. The Hamilton County board of education

is itself a self-perpetuating bureaucracy not amenable to democratic control, the committee reports:

The integrity of a public issue must rest on the integrity of those promoting it. Since the proposed 8 to 11 school district consolidation would be run directly by its promoters, the Hamilton County Board of Education, perhaps we should take a good look at that illustrious body of public masters.

Fortunately, we have available to us a searching analysis of the County Board of Education by the Hamilton County Good Government League. In the interest of truth in public affairs the League makes this scathing denunciation:

"The County Board of Education has developed a smooth technique of self-preservation. . . . The dynasty has endured for decades. . . . To counteract any bona fide citizens' slates, [the Board] hauls out a well-financed 'citizens' committee,' the last two chairmen of which have been board members. . . . A clear and present danger is that the Board may see in the lack of opposition a chance to railroad half-planned projects without fear of reprisal at the polls."

Even the Co-ordinating Council for Hamilton County Public Schools—an active advocate of consolidation—has lost patience with the County Board of Education: "You have yourselves to blame for the people having lost faith in everything you do and say; the cause of consolidation has been dealt a damaging blow by the high-handed, undemocratic way in which you have handled this 8-district consolidation."

Against such drives to end their existence and functions as communities, diverse suburbs and rural villages in the county have few resources with which to resist. The metropolitan newspapers maintain the drive to persuade their suburban readers, the city officials and planning boards are committed to annexation, the state and county officials are committed to consolidation; and only the general reluctance and courageous action of a concerned, alert and self-sacrificing citizenship can save these communities. In Hamilton County two cases are now in court awaiting decision, and in the meantime the mills of consolidation and annexation grind on.

The fate of such suburban communities is of far more than local importance. The small community is in transition, from a primitive to a modern form. It is in the suburbs that this transition is now taking place.

The following extract from a New York Times report by Benjamin Fine, educational editor for the Times, is strong testimony to the advantages of small community self-mastery as compared with annexation and consolidation into huge governmental units, in developing the pattern of the future community.

SUBURBAN COMMUNITIES ARE MAKING HEADWAY WITH
THEIR SPECIAL SCHOOL PROBLEMS

by Benjamin Fine

Reprinted from the *New York Times*, December 20, 1953

With the increasing movement of population from the large cities to the suburbs, a serious school problem has arisen for metropolitan areas in all parts of the country. New housing developments are now shooting up in many suburbs, all too often without adequate thought of educational needs. As a result, school needs become ever more pressing.

A survey, just completed by this writer, of 250 school communities located within a fifty-mile radius of New York City, offers examples of this situation. Many communities in this area, which includes Westchester County and parts of Long Island, New Jersey and Connecticut, are largely "commuters' towns."

Chief among educational problems facing the suburbs is that of a teacher shortage. . . . Good teachers simply are not available. Superintendents report that they sometimes have to scrape the bottom of the barrel to get competent teachers—and are unhappy in doing it. The elementary level, where the enrollment growth is greatest, is hardest hit.

It is not unusual to find the school population doubled in half a decade. Everywhere metropolitan suburbs note that they are unable to keep pace with school enrollment. Plans for a new school are often scrapped and bigger plans substituted almost before a bond issue is passed. . . .

Because of the citizens' interest in the schools, the money, for the most part, is forthcoming. Now and then a much-needed school is voted down. Some communities feel that real estate cannot be taxed any higher. But in the main, public support is given to the suburban schools.

Despite the handicaps under which many of the rapidly growing suburban communities operate, the school systems are usually good. Whether because of a greater personal interest taken by suburban residents, or because the new home-owner wants to protect his "investment" by supporting a drive for better schools, the fact remains that the smaller communities are doing a good job in maintaining high standards. Some of the suburban areas, of course, have a long, long way to go before they rid themselves of backward teaching and timid school administration. As a generalization, though, it is fair to say that the smaller community provides greater incentive than the city for the citizen to take an active role in working with the school system.

Good practices are found everywhere in the suburbs—as, indeed, they are in the cities. But it seems that the smaller communities are more alert to the best teaching techniques, and are willing to experiment more.

LET THE PEOPLE LEAD THE TOWN*

By MORTON M. HUNT

Dr. Max Wolff, one-time judge, and well-known pioneering sociologist at Teachers College, Columbia University, was for some years the trouble-shooting community consultant of the Commission on Community Interrelations. In trying to help people in disturbed communities work out solutions for their problems, Dr. Wolff became aware that "there is an unbelievable amount of good will available—and an unbelievable ineffectiveness in applying it to practical purposes." This aggravated him; he decided to find out what patterns of community activity succeed, and which ones flop.

In search of that answer, Dr. Wolff has just completed dissection of 2,000 community case histories. One of his conclusions is that a principal reason why community leaders fail is that they try too hard to do all the work. They want to "run things." But communities in a democratic society don't function right when people run them. They get balky, ornery, unreasonable and cantankerous.

Maybe you'd like to see your community improved for the sake of your own business—with better traffic control, better-trained labor, less sickness. Maybe you simply want your home town to be a finer place for you and your family to live—with less crime, new schools, better water supply.

In any case, how should you go about trying to do something about it—should you pull the community by the head, or should you get it to figure out for itself where it ought to go?

Dr. Wolff's studies show that one way works well, and the other generally doesn't work at all.

He points out, for instance, that one of our nation's biggest appliance manufacturing firms decided a few years ago to improve its community relations. An executive urged his factory managers in a dozen towns to become active in community life, to do something good for the community and bring prestige to the firm's name. Within months, letters of protest were pouring in, union-management relations were coming apart, and local opinion of the firm was worse. In every community the reaction was the same: "What are they trying to do—run this town?"

A sharp contrast to this was provided by Setauket, a quiet rural community of 3,000 far out on Long Island. Setauket had a dingy, over-crowded old wooden school building, quite inadequate for a modern job of educa-

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tion. State officials wanted to send Setauket children to a newer school in a nearby town, but Setauket wouldn't have it. They wanted their own school; yet three times when the school board recommended a bond issue for a new school building, it was turned down.

Finally the school principal, Paul Gelinis, read an article by Dr. Wolff on the difference between working for and with communities. He decided to take a new tack. With one or two members of the Civic Association he began quietly asking everyone he met around town: What do you think we can do about a better school? What sort of improvements should it have? How big should it be? What would you be willing to pay?

A few men asking these questions again and again began to excite interest. Several weeks later the Civic Association called a meeting and asked each of the 30 social, business and church groups in town to send delegates to talk about the school problem. Not one group failed to send its people.

"We're not here to give you answers," a local merchant told the delegates. "We want the answers to come from you. Will you go out and get them for us?"

That night, committees of citizens were set up to study every aspect of the problem. One group was to consult architects and books of school design; another would study a budget; a third would find out what a new school would do to tax rates; others would look into questions of ventilation, modern heating techniques, the kind of staff needed, and so on.

Each committee asked for volunteer help in town. Again and again it was made clear that nobody was campaigning for one kind of school or another, but rather everyone was trying to figure out which kind was best.

After three months reports were turned in to the newly formed United School Committee. Findings were published in the local papers, and the people who had worked on them kept explaining the whys and hows to friends and neighbors. A week later the town held a referendum for a \$634,000 bond issue and voted yes by a seven-to-one margin.

Today Setauket's school, handsomely modern and winner of awards for excellence in design, is the town's pride and joy. The children are getting a richer education, and the adults have a fine place to focus their evening activities. It is something they all helped to work out.

When Dr. Wolff decided to dig into the case of the cantankerous community, he asked the General Federation of Women's Clubs to let him analyze the submitted case histories in the national community-betterment contest they had just run. At the same time, he wangled Carnegie Foundation funds from the Institute for Adult Education at Teachers College to pay expenses.

Dr. Wolff worked out a nine-page, 199-question analysis, based on modern sociological principles. With the help of 20 graduate students, he evaluated each of the 2,000 histories of community activity, and followed up his work with letters, phone calls, and as many personal visits as his budget would allow. As a result, he sees a clear pattern:

"In less than 20 per cent of these case histories," he says, "all of which were supposed to be examples of community self-improvement, can you find any real evidence of widespread participation. In most of them you read about small high-powered groups of do-ers who figure out what should be done, sometimes letting the people help a bit. Our analysis indicates that most of the results were definitely less than satisfactory—and the extra dividends of a new community spirit are missing.

"On the other hand, in that small percentage where wise leaders tried to encourage thinking and self-inspired planning among broad segments of the population, the results are excellent, and the byproducts, though hard to measure, are unmistakable and most impressive."

Failure to understand all this has cost many an American businessman plenty of good dollars. A businessman gets used to executive efficiency, quick decisions, clear-cut action. When he takes things in hand they, by George, get done! But democracy doesn't work that way.

In Connecticut, a wealthy factory owner recently offered to build and donate to his town a fully-equipped YMCA building. He was offended when the council politely refused the gift. The council didn't really know whether the town needed such a thing; but they did know that it would take a staff to run it. Hence the YMCA would be a continuing expense. Finally the outraged philanthropist put up that money, too, and managed to cram his gift down the town's throat.

A manufacturer recently asked Dr. Wolff to give him a blueprint for getting the citizens of his town to clean out the city hall graft, to stop the waste of money that should have been going into a better transportation system. "I wish I could give you such a blueprint," said Dr. Wolff. "But that's exactly what I can't do. As a consultant, I can work along with committees of townspeople—but if I tell them just what to start doing, I am bound to fail for myself and fail for them."

Nevertheless, there are a thousand possible ways in which a community can solve any one problem. Dr. Wolff is planning to keep a file of case histories of community activity in a kind of clinic and clearinghouse where representatives of troubled towns can read how towns like their own, with problems like their own, met and conquered—or failed to conquer—a challenge.

REVIEWS

The Quest for Community: A Study in the Ethics of Order and Freedom, by Robert A. Nisbet (New York. Oxford University Press, 1953, 312 pages, \$5.00).

This book is a scattered but lucid representation of the nature and problem of the mass-oriented state. In the conclusion the author, professor of sociology at the University of California, sums up his thesis with beautiful clarity:

At the present time we are suspended, so to speak, between two worlds of allegiance and association. On the one hand, and partly behind us, is the world in which loyalties of family, church, profession, local community, and interest association exert, however ineffectively, persuasion and guidance. On the other hand is the world of values identical with the absolute political community—the community in which all symbolism, allegiance, responsibility, and sense of purpose have become indistinguishable from the operation of centralized political power. In the Western democracies we have moved partly into the second, but not wholly out of the first. In this suspended position lie both our danger and our hope—our hope because we have not yet become separated wholly, as have many European populations, from the social sources of freedom, and because our wills have not yet become anesthetized into moral passivity; our danger because manifestly these sources have become weakened and the spell of the political community has become ever more intense. . . . Of what value now are differentiations in extent of electorates, in frequency of elections, in mass participation in politics? Government of, by, and for the people, for all its verity as an abstract proposition, becomes nearly irrelevant in a world where all despotisms rest upon foundations of mass acquiescence and where all arts of political propaganda are employed to sink roots of government deeply in popular consciousness and participation.

In the opinion of this reviewer this is a tremendously important and profound thesis. It takes a careful reading of the book to get the full force of the arguments in support of it. Having said this, I will venture to point out some weaknesses in the presentation, not because they bring the book down from the level of importance but because they seem to abort its full significance.

The author deplors the all-too-common practice of identifying the modern state with society as such. This puts him in a position to point out the essential difference between the two. Yet he does not seem to take full advantage of this. In a somewhat confusing and seemingly contradictory

statement Mr. Nisbet represents the state as "unitary, absolute, and imprescriptible. This is as true of democracy as of any other form of government. . . . In power the contemporary state is, and must be, *sui generis*." Perhaps this explains why the author offers little remedy for the "evils" of the modern state beyond the kind of moralizing he undertakes in this book. Presumably if the state ignores such moralizing words without corresponding deeds there is nothing to do but to complain about the "moral depravity of man." The several quotations from Reinhold Niebuhr in the book tend to support this interpretation.

The author would no doubt counter that he does suggest deeds as well as words. The book emphasizes clearly the critical importance of participation in the lesser groups of society: civic groups, discussion groups, co-operatives, etc. This is conceived of as the antidote to totalitarian statism. And it would be a good answer. For our purposes, however, it only affords opportunity to make our basic criticism more explicit. The crucial question in distinguishing between the state and society is: "Which is to include the other as ultimately subservient." At some points it seems clear that Mr. Nisbet intends the state to be subservient to society, the latter including moral and spiritual considerations which the formal-mechanistic structure of the state necessarily shirks. But the author's statement about the state being "*sui generis*" seems to contradict this. If the state is to be supreme, then the only other societal groups which will be allowed to exist will be those which accept their subservience to the state and which are therefore morally and spiritually subordinate. With the state supreme we have essentially a "mechanistic society" with little to distinguish it from totalitarian statism. But if society is to be supreme in the best sense, then we *can* have an "organic society" wherein the state and other essentially mechanistic and mass-oriented institutions are appropriately disciplined according to moral and spiritual dictates.

How are these moral and spiritual educational forces to be generated and to operate in society? Mr. Nisbet's emphasis on society's non-governmental formal and informal associations seems on the right track. The crucial characteristic of these groups must be, however, that they be overseers of the state rather than subservient to it, that their organizational structure be such (those that have formal structure) that it is conducive to the generation of moral and spiritual discernment *and action*. Traditionally the educational and religious associations have been central in this effort. The movement for separation of the church and state was motivated by recognition of the moral necessity of keeping the state subservient. But today there is danger that that state will come in "by the back door," allowing religious and educational associations to have their ritualistic and academic trappings while whisking away their souls. To allow that the state is "*sui*

generis" would seem to assure this fate. The tragedy of this book seems akin to the tragedy of our age: we don't seem to be able to muster that final bit of courage to "call a spade a spade," to affirm in deed as well as word the inadequacy of the purely political society.

The fault does not lie with the state any more than "with the stars, but with ourselves, that we are underlings." The state is merely moving in, in its mechanical, insensitive, inevitable way. We cannot blame Frankenstein that he has no soul; the blame is with his maker and sustainer. Those who try to administer the modern state exhaust themselves trying to bend and adapt an insensitive machine to meet the moral challenges of our age. But the machine doesn't have the necessary soul.

The job is indeed to rebuild our individual moral selves and thence our "conscience" institutions. It is in considering the organizational form which these are to take that Mr. Nisbet gives us some important food for thought. For he points out that a "Bill of Rights" is not sufficient when the interpretation of those rights is in the hands of the majority-rule system. Over the years the administrators of "justice" who are chosen and sustained by this mechanistic system supply the operational definitions on these "rights." There is no assurance that any worded statement can long limit the power and extension of majority opinion when the *interpretation* of such a statement is by organizational design placed in the hands of the mass rule of majority vote. And what does rule by majority vote mean? It means the rule of the "politicians," defined as those whose thoughts and deeds are governed by one essential criterion: how will it affect the vote?—there being no moral consideration involved. As long as we accept the pattern of majority rule as absolute we shall have more and more McCarthys with sufficient skill to hoodwink the minimal 51% by modern techniques of mass deception and propaganda. Taking the state as supreme means taking the "politician" as supreme, it means more vividly taking McCarthyism as supreme!

Neither Mr. Nisbet nor this reviewer would deny the state the role of skeleton framework of society. Mr. Nisbet suggests ways of putting flesh and blood (and perhaps brain) around the skeleton, but his failure to provide for a moral and spiritual soul in his society leaves it only a dressed-up skeleton, an "absolute, and imprescriptible" state in essence; therefore morally depraved.

The moral aspect of society has taken many forms in the past. The basic element is the aroused and courageous individual conscience, the Jesus, the Socrates, the Thoreau. Out of these individual nuclei, movements and institutions have developed, nourished and sustained by other individual moral selves. This implies more than *individual* conscience operating, of course;

it implies something like *group* conscience, ■ general moral sense sweeping over a group, and sometimes over a whole people. The ones who seem to have taken fullest advantage of this possibility for developing *group* moral consciousness are the Quakers. They met first as conscience-aroused individuals; but in meeting together they found that something new emerged among them, ■ higher synthesis of the best in each, a new spiritual organism which they came to term the Meeting. Soon their whole motivation centered around the "*sense* of the Meeting," the group moral sense. History has recorded the potency and tremendous moral effect of the Quaker moral sense. There is evidence that it was William Penn who changed Locke from aristocratic to democratic views of government. And Penn's own success in making peace with the American Indians is well known. The Quakers were the first to institute prison service and to bring about prison reform in England, and later to pioneer in the freedom of slaves in this country. Their "Peace Testimony" is well known, and at one time most of their leaders were in English prisons for their refusals to bring (in one way or another) that "pinch of incense" to the altar of the state.

Mr. Nisbet is a sociologist. As a sociologist per se he does very well; his analysis is keen and courageous. But as pure sociologist he has no forecast to offer. This reviewer has suggested what might have been said to extend and enhance his thesis. But he is none the less grateful for the thesis as far as it goes, and looks forward to seeing more of Mr. Nisbet's writings on this and related subjects.

—ALFRED F. ANDERSEN

After his travels in this country, about 1831, Tocqueville wrote: "The American Revolution broke out, and *the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people*, which had been *nurtured in the townships and municipalities*, took possession of the state, every class enlisted in its cause; battles were fought and victories obtained for it; until it became the law of laws." From the beginning of our national existence democracy has flourished in the villages and towns. And yet today in many small communities children are denied the educational opportunities to be expected under a democratic form of government. In most instances this neglect arises from lack of financial resources and of educational leadership. It will test the ingenuity of all citizens to discover ways of surmounting these obstacles while, at the same time, preserving the unique contribution of the small community to American civilization.

—from the Foreword, *Schools in Small Communities*,
Seventeenth Yearbook, American Association of
School Administrators.

LEGAL FORM VERSUS SOCIOLOGICAL FACT

Reorganization of School Units, Katherine M. Cook, editor (U.S. Office of Education, Bulletin 1935, No. 15, 91 pages, 1936).

The present divergence of opinion about the relation of the community to its school was as much in evidence eighteen years ago in a conference on the reorganization of school units called by the Commissioner of Education of the United States Bureau of Education. The two positions that are still so much in contrast were clearly stated. Howard Dawson, now head of the National Education Association's division of rural education, defined the problem in terms of the legal statute rather than sociological reality:

THE POWER OF THE LEGISLATURE OVER SCHOOL UNITS

The control and maintenance of the public-school system is a State function. . . .

The question of vested interest of school districts that have long been in operation sometimes arises in the abolition and consolidation of districts. The following quotation from Edwards (3:689) is a complete answer to such a question:

"Whatever agencies the legislature may select as the instruments for the execution of its educational policies, these agencies are completely subject to its control within constitutional limits. . . . Since school districts are purely creatures of the State, they possess no inherent local rights; no rights at all, in fact, except such as are delegated. In the words of the Supreme Court of North Carolina, 'Such organizations are intended to be instrumentalities and agencies employed to aid in the administration of the government and are always under the control of the power that created them, unless the same shall be restricted by some constitutional limitation.' . . . Long exercise of powers on the part of local units does not give rise to vested interests, for the State does not relinquish control to the school system by delegating some of its authority to the different localities."

We could with similar appropriateness say that since the state establishes conditions and licenses for marriage, the family is a creature of the state, possessing no inherent rights.

The contrasting sociological reality was stated equally clearly by Timon Covert, specialist in school finance, U.S. Bureau of Education:

LOCAL INITIATIVE AND FREEDOM IN LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL UNITS

The question of local autonomy is considered one of vital importance by a majority of authorities in the field of school administration. A careful

reading of the literature on the subject leads to the conclusion that our public schools have developed in truly American democratic fashion because they enjoyed local initiative. In exercising self-expression in matters pertaining to problems which are chiefly of local interest, school communities appear to safeguard and nourish American ideals of government. A leading writer on school administration and finance declares that the various school communities throughout the Nation are bound together by a common heritage of American ideals, but that each community selected for adoption those best adapted to its conditions, needs, and resources.

Writers and school officials frequently express the opinion that school administration should be such as to promote a maximum degree of local interest in public schools. Any plan for school administration, they contend, should foster rather than suppress local initiative and interest. Professor Judd states this idea in the following words:

"The school is so essentially a matter of community interest and support that it ought not to be forced to adopt for its government any artificial boundaries. The school district of the United States has been throughout its history the clearest expression of the community type of organization."

Professor Bobbitt, writing in the same report on the school system of New York State, calls attention to the danger of bureaucratic management of local affairs by a central office:

"A central office, distant from the local situations with all their peculiarities of conditions and needs, not continuously in touch with them, tends toward mechanical uniform bureaucratic management of local affairs. And this nullifies local autonomy. The method of local initiative and central approval easily degenerates into the method of bureaucratic dictation. This tendency is specially strong where the local units are numerous and each relatively weak."*

In reporting on the fiscal policies in Pennsylvania at about the time the New York State schools were surveyed, Professors Updegraff and King write:

"State aid should be distributed also in such a way as to promote the efficient participation of citizens in the exercise of citizenship. The converse of this proposition is that it should not be so administered as to promote bureaucratic control of either State, county, or local education offices."

Early writings on local school administration, as well as recent treatments, emphasize the importance of local participation in school matters. Invariably the conviction on the part of the writer is that leadership is of greater value in school improvement than is bureaucratic authority exercised from a central office.

*Judd, Charles H., *Recommendations* (in *Rural School Survey of New York State*, Vol. II, p. 601; Ithaca, N.Y., Survey Committee, 1923).

Broadening the Services of Small High Schools, by Walter H. Gaumnitz and Grace S. Wright (U.S. Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin 1948, No. 9, 45 pages, 20 cents).

This bulletin is an excellent survey of successful practice in small community high schools, and a study of the obstacles that stand in the way of modern educational practices. Portions of the bulletin are so valuable that we include them here for benefit of *Community Service News* readers:

Although the problems of the high schools serving rural youth are numerous and persistent, many of them are being overcome by school men and women of vision, enterprise, and zeal in all parts of the Nation. These leaders have found that duplicating the programs and operational patterns of the large schools is not the best way to deal with the limitations of secondary education inherent in the smallness of available enrollments, staff, equipment, administrative unit, and taxable resources. They have discovered that small enrollments can promote the adjustment of instruction to individual pupil needs and interests; that small staffs can facilitate friendly and natural cooperation among administrators, teachers, parents, and pupils; that the limitations of equipment and school plant can be supplemented by a wider use of homes, farms, industries, and social institutions; and that these are more natural and effective places of learning than the schoolroom.

Statistics for 1945-46 reveal that of the 12,000 regularly organized 4-year high schools in the United States, more than half have enrollments smaller than 100, and nearly a fourth more have enrollments between 100 and 200. The numerical preponderance of these small high schools is reason enough to suggest that this segment of American secondary education deserves more experimentation, study, and leadership than has been devoted to it in the past. . . .

For the sake of emphasis, the essence and underlying principles of the procedures and activities described in this document for the modernization of the small high school are here set forth:

1. The motivating philosophy and objectives of each small high school are developed cooperatively by the entire staff, by representative student groups, and in consultation with the patrons of the school so that they may have value and meaning to all concerned.

2. The curriculum of the small high school, and its auxiliary programs, are designed for maximum service to rural youth, and therefore are concerned most with those problems and activities which will clearly help youth "to do better those desirable things they will do anyway" and will afford them realistic opportunities to cooperate among themselves and with others in shaping their own lives and in improving their own homes and their immediate communities.

3. While the program of activities of the small high school is developed

in terms of the rural environment, and is concerned chiefly with the enrichment of life in rural America, it will continuously relate itself to society as a whole.

4. The small high school stresses problems and projects concerned with the enrichment of daily living *now*, rather than the mastery of subjects and textbooks, preparation for successively higher grades, for college, or for life in a future, adult world.

5. The teachers and supervisors of the small high school have special training in the methods and techniques of teaching which are best suited to the rural school situation. These methods and techniques emphasize democratic relationships; careful study of the peculiar needs and interests of individual pupils; use of educative experiences best suited for meeting such needs and interests; maximum use of community resources; recognition of educational values resident in nonclassroom work and community activities; and skill and boldness in fusing the common elements of two or more subjects, in alternating subjects, and in supplementing the school's offerings through supervised correspondence courses, individualized study procedures, itinerant teachers, and the like. . . .

Reports from the small high schools emphasize the integration of their programs with community needs. Many of them express the belief that in this way more than in any other they are helping to meet the needs of rural youth who are not served by the traditional college-preparatory curriculum.

In the survey of why small high schools have been handicapped, the most prominent handicap was found to be a curriculum restricted to traditional standards, dominated by college requirements, and failing to make use of the opportunities of the immediate environment. Second most prominent was the lack of teachers qualified for such schools.

Among the successful schools studied, the example of one that used correspondence courses to broaden the curriculum is especially significant. That course of action is increasingly being regarded as opening a whole new range of opportunity.

Millington High School, Millington, Mich. This school enrolls 178 pupils in grades 8-12, and employs a small staff of six teachers. . . . It was realized that in order to serve the community adequately, a variety of courses was needed which would run beyond any possibility of staffing them. Therefore, in 1939 the Board of Education approved the recommendation that pupils be allowed credit for courses taken by correspondence. A competent teacher was assigned for one class period each day to offer personal assistance to students enrolled in such courses. According to reports:

"In a very short period of time it was discovered that the school curriculum had been considerably enriched and the demand for the varied courses met. Guidance on the part of the school was very effective in the selection of courses and in planning for the students. . . . Through correspondence

courses it is now possible to outline a school program which is very extensive for the so-called brighter pupils."

Work Experience in Home, School, and Community. The small high school which is doing outstanding work in integrating its instructional program with community activities can often at the same time provide valuable work experience for its pupils and thereby make the instruction offered doubly meaningful. Thus, we see examples of practical work experience, paid or unpaid, in most of the accounts of school activities appearing in the previous section. The general shop course at the Brookwood High School was evaluated in terms of the actual repairs the boys made on furniture in their homes. Pupils of Plainview-Rover School were encouraged to grow vegetables at home for the school lunch program, for which they were paid by the school. . . . Millington High School arranged for boys and girls to gain work experience in the commercial field in local stores. The forest project at Floodwood High School was also operated as a source of income to the pupils who work on the project outside of school hours. . . .

Friendship Community School (Ark.) has provided another type of work experience for its boys—that of helping with the actual building of parts of the school plant. . . . Probably the outstanding achievement of the Friendship program is that through the cooperation and participation required, the people of the entire community have come to feel it is their school. This came about in the following way: In 1941 the available agriculture building had to be enlarged. The construction of this building was begun by the boys of Future Farmers of America and completed by members of an adult carpentry class organized as part of the War Training Program. This class, with the aid of volunteer labor donated by both men and boys of the community, did most of the work needed to make the buildings [most of the school plant] a reality. Some men of the local community cut logs on the school property; others donated logs from their own farms and sawed them into lumber at the school's sawmill which had been procured for the purpose. All of the buildings on the campus have been constructed through self-help activities except the freezer locker plant.

The instructional programs accompanying these projects were made flexible enough to allow boys to use a great deal of their time in helping their fathers and neighbors in these construction projects. This was in keeping with the philosophy of the school leadership, which held that labor educates and that it is valuable for boys and adults to work together on community enterprises of common concern.

Guidance, Counseling, and Evaluation Services and Problems. Small high schools have found it difficult to provide effective guidance services. This is particularly true when they have tried to develop a "guidance service program" on the large-school pattern—full-time guidance specialist, a comprehensive testing and accounting system, individual and group counseling schedules, try-out courses and activities, occupation courses, placement and

follow-up services. However, insofar as the small high school actively enters into the life of the community and brings the people and their problems into the life of the school, the pupils receive much helpful educational and vocational guidance. Contacts are made with professional, business, labor, and farm groups; understanding is gained of the nature, problems, and rewards inherent in the activities of these groups; ideas on the direction and purposes of life are formed; and objectives and values become apparent.

Many of the school-community activities already described, repeatedly suggest that staffs of small high schools recognize the importance of guidance both as an organized service and as a planned byproduct of many school-community services.

The problem of getting and keeping a competent teaching staff is a major one in view of the general practice in America of using rural areas and smaller institutions as training grounds for beginners who are expected to advance to large institutions in larger cities as they gain experience and competence. The bulletin offers many suggestions for dealing with this problem, of which the following is noteworthy:

The following paragraphs coming from Michigan, Virginia, and Maine will serve as illustrations of what leaders think should be done:

The best small schools in our State are those which have managed to retain the services of a creative and courageous administrator for a period of years, together with a staff which is interested in developing a real community school. In such circumstances it is usually possible to interest the school in exchanging visits with other similar schools, in entertaining area curriculum conferences, in bringing in consultants from the colleges and State agencies, in providing adequate instructional materials and visual aids, and in general in continuing a critical examination of the values which they hold and the methods employed to achieve them. (Mich.)

A bibliography of some fifty items adds to the usefulness of this publication.

The Community School, edited by Nelson B. Henry (Part II, 52nd Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education; University of Chicago Press, 1953, 364 pages, \$3.50).

This series of essays surveys the prevailing thought, practice and problems of this, the present emphasis in educational theory. The concluding statement in an essay, "The Impact of the Power Age on the Community-School Concept," by Robert Naslund, reviews the fundamental assumptions in current literature on the community school. They are summarized as follows:

1. . . . Contributors to this yearbook believe that, through a program of school-community interaction, youth can once more be brought into close contact with community living so that they may develop in the optimum manner as worthy citizens of a democratic society.

2. It is fundamental to the thinking of these writers that the total community is the educative agency rather than the school alone. Because this point of view is accepted, all of them see the school occupying a strategic place in co-ordinating and helping to direct the educative efforts of all community agencies to the end that the best possible training be given to youth. None of them sees the school as usurping in the slightest degree the place of any agency or institution. . . .

3. It is fundamental to the thinking of these writers that the American public school should have broader concern than the intellectual training of youth. They insist that a primary goal in addition to the training of youth must be the improvement of community living in all its broad aspects. . . . To meet this broad aim of education, they propose a school which makes use of the special talents and abilities of all members of the community as they can contribute rather than limiting the school training to the traditional faculty personnel. In this sense, then, education becomes a community concern. . . .

4. These authors have made abundantly clear the fact that one of the most significant resources which any community has is the interest and vigor of its youth. In order to harness this tremendous energy, they propose that . . . youth have the opportunity to participate meaningfully in meeting the needs of their communities and, through this participation, develop an ability to participate intelligently and efficiently as adults in community enterprises.

5. These writers see common concerns of both children and adults in both work and play activities. . . .

6. Inherent as stated in all of the above discussions is a firm belief in the efficiency and necessity of using democratic group processes. The authors see such a community program as resulting from the cooperative efforts of pupils, faculty, and community members joined together as partners attacking a problem of mutual concern.

A prominent American educator recently visited many schools that have sought to develop community programs, and he reported widespread failure in this endeavor. In his own school he has success in sharing direction and responsibility for many school functions with his community, but in most schools he visited he found a distrust of the community by school executives. In conventional practice the community school concept tended to mean that school administrators tried to extend their domain into the community, rather than that the school would be integrated into the community. Consequently when the school administrator got a new job and left town, there was nothing left of the "community school."

This and other problems of community schools is dealt with in another concluding essay, "Overcoming Barriers to the Development of Community Schools," by Maurice Seay and John Wilkinson of the University of Chicago.

School-Size as a Factor in the Adjustment of High School Seniors, by Carol M. Larson, State College of Washington, Bulletin No. 511, Youth Series No. 6, November 1949, 32 pages.

This bulletin gives clear evidence that in important respects small schools have distinctive values, as well as—with prevailing practices—distinctive disadvantages, as compared with large schools. The comparison shows that in general the personalities of children were more secure in small schools, children more generally and readily were involved in activities, they liked each other more, they felt in their teachers more friendliness and sympathetic guidance. On the other hand, there was clear evidence of inadequate variety of subjects and less vocational preparation for life. Students in small high schools demonstrated greater anxiety over being able to talk to people and over moral problems.

Selected Characteristics of Reorganized School Districts, by C. O. Fitzwater (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, Bulletin 1953, No. 3, 48 pages, 20 cents).

The best development of the community school requires that the boundaries and organization of the school district should conform to the natural boundaries of the community and that it not be confined within the state administrative sub-unit of the county. Many communities have been thwarted in their efforts to achieve a community district by restrictions of outdated county and state boundaries. A recent study of reorganized school districts by the Office of Education of the United States government reports a remarkable change in dealing with this problem throughout America. The following quotations give an idea of this change:

What is surprising is the degree to which county lines were disregarded [in the reorganization of districts]. Striking evidence of this disregard for county lines is revealed by the fact that 217 of the 548 districts (studied) had territory in more than one county. It is important to recognize that these were not county-unit districts with territory extending into other counties. They contained only the parts of more than one county. All the States except Washington had some of these districts. More than two fifths of those in Illinois and Missouri and three eighths of those in Michigan, Minnesota, and New York contained portions of the territory of more than one county. . . .

There was a very small degree of relationship between the area of a district and whether it was part of a single county or contained portions of more than one. . . . Each size-group had sizable proportions of districts with territory in more than one county. Even among those under 25 square miles a fifth were of this type.

The fact that so few districts included the territory of an entire county was in itself revealing. While some counties may correspond closely to natural sociological communities, most have more than one community within their borders. Some estimates indicate there are more than ten times as many trade-centered rural communities than there are counties.

The median enrollment for the 552 districts was 626 pupils, indicating that half the districts had enrollments smaller than that number.

SMALL COMMUNITY HOSPITALS

In the case of many hospital and other medical services the factors of convenience and distance are just as crucial as in the case of many other things which the farmer buys. A very large percentage of the medical and hospital services are related to minor illnesses, obstetrics, and health examinations which can be handled by general practitioners in the rural community, provided modern diagnostic and hospital facilities are available.

The quality of general medical care in the small hospital does not present a serious problem. Cases of major surgery and other complex illnesses can be referred to the larger hospitals and to appropriate specialists; and this is something that can be controlled easily.

Medical and hospital service can be rendered at a lower cost in rural hospitals. The small hospital overhead is smaller because it does not have to maintain as much expensive and complex ancillary service as does the large hospital. Also labor costs in the small hospital are usually lower because of lower living costs, and because not as many varieties of skilled workers and technicians are required. The cost of operating a hospital (per patient day) in a hospital of from 15 to 24 beds in Saskatchewan, Canada, is only 80 per cent of the corresponding cost in hospitals of more than 200 beds. (Source: *Annual Report* of the Saskatchewan Hospital Service Plan, 1949, page 68.) In the United States the per patient day cost of operating hospitals under 50 beds in size is only 80 per cent of the cost of operating hospitals of 250 beds or more. (Source: *Hospitals*, Part II, Administrator's Guide Issue, June 1951, Table 5, page 16.)

—From *A Study of the Need for Several Small Hospitals in Rural Wake County, North Carolina*, by C. Horace Hamilton, North Carolina State College, Raleigh.

Correspondence

I have a feeling those articles [on the community school] aren't going to help much. As I remember them, they tended to be abstract and too much on the defensive, perhaps because there is little information available on your position.

It seemed to me that the best approach might be to suggest materials on how to make small schools good. In comparing the schools as is and a bigger school, the consolidated school might be better. However, the community school as it should be might be better than the consolidated school could be. If you can suggest any sources of information on what the small high school should be like, I would like to pass it on.

WALTER GORMLY
Mt. Vernon, Iowa

As you probably know, our case [on school consolidation] is now in court with an injunction. So we do not know how it will come out, but are hopeful.

Thanks again for your splendid help. The issue of *C.S. News* was an excellent source of help and I credit it with a great deal of our success.

PAUL C. HAYES, Supt.,
Sharonville, Ohio

I have before me the November-December [1952] issue of *C.S. News*. I am especially interested in the article entitled, "The Small Community and

School Reorganization." I believe that you have dealt with one of the most vital problems that face sociologists and educators who are interested in more adequate school district reorganization.

ROLAND S. STROLLE
Michigan Dept. of
Public Instruction

The following letter from Mrs. Stilwell refers to the article, "Suburban Communities in Self Defense," in this issue of C. S. News, which Mrs. Stilwell read in manuscript.

We appreciate very much being shown your extremely interesting article about the three conflicting drives that are widespread in American governmental policies and that were brought into view when our eight Hamilton County communities endeavored to maintain their integrity and existence, and also the article on suburban problems in general.

Mr. Stilwell you describe as a consulting engineer. He is also a graduate of Harvard College (with engineering training at the University of Cincinnati) and was a graduate student at the School of International Studies, Geneva, Switzerland. His family has been distinguished in the educational field and prominent in Cincinnati civic affairs. He is a member of the Board of Public Affairs of the Village of Glendale.

—FRANCES H. STILWELL
Glendale, Ohio